

**DEPARTMENT OF AGING**

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# PROGRAM MEMO

TO: <b>AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTORS</b>	NO.: <b>PM 04-02 (P)</b>
SUBJECT: <b>UPDATE ON STATEWIDE HICAP TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER</b>	DATE ISSUED: <b>April 5, 2004</b>
Effective Date:	EXPIRES: <b>April 30, 2006</b>
REFERENCES: <b>PM 99-26 (P)</b>	SUPERSEDES:
PROGRAMS AFFECTED: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>All</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Title III-B <input type="checkbox"/> Title III-C1/C2 <input type="checkbox"/> Title III-D <input type="checkbox"/> Title III-F <input type="checkbox"/> Title V <input type="checkbox"/> CBSP <input type="checkbox"/> MSSP <input type="checkbox"/> Title VII <input type="checkbox"/> ADHC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
REASON FOR PROGRAM MEMO: <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Law or Regulation <input type="checkbox"/> Response to Inquiry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Specify: <b>Information Update</b>	
INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO: <b>John Carr, Assistant Director, Office of Public Affairs, (916) 322-3887 – <a href="mailto:jcarr@aging.ca.gov">jcarr@aging.ca.gov</a></b>	

This Program Memo provides updated information on the operation and maintenance of the statewide toll-free number for the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP): 1-800-434-0222.

## Program Supervision

John Carr, California Department of Aging (CDA) Assistant Director of Public Affairs, is responsible for the operation of the toll-free line system for the CDA and the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA).

## Program Background and Operation

MCI is under contract to provide all State of California long-distance and toll-free services, including the CDA HICAP line. MCI uses a database of area code/prefix combinations\* to route to the appropriate termination. This means a call to the toll-free number (1-800-434-0222) connects the caller to the local HICAP service site. This process, known as prefix routing, automatically forwards the caller by area code and prefix to the assigned telephone number, specified by the AAA, of the HICAP site.

\* (See Attachment C2)

## **Misrouted Calls**

Even though the system is stable, routing problems can occur for a variety of reasons.

Some of the potential problems and reasons for the misrouted calls are noted below:

1. Wireless (cellular) calls: Routing of wireless calls is unpredictable. They rely on relay stations to pass along the calling signal. Because those relay stations may or may not be in the immediate area from which the call is being placed, the call may end up at the wrong provider or site.
2. Full caller-blocking: These lines are unreadable and may cause a call to be misdirected. This is often a problem with cell phones.
3. Changed HICAP Location or Designated Number: When changing a HICAP phone number, it is imperative that the new number be reported to the CDA prior to the move or number change.
4. Area Code splits: The split or creation of a new area code can create problems, especially when new prefixes are introduced at the same time the area code split is being implemented.
5. Unrecognized prefixes: New prefixes are being added to accommodate the increasing need for new numbers. The CDA toll-free system is based on a positive link between each area code/prefix combination and a single local telephone number. If the system does not recognize an area code/prefix combination, the call is immediately routed to a pre-designated answering point.
6. Vendor-caused problems: There are two types of vendor-caused problems. One relates to the age and sophistication of equipment in place at any given switch location. The other source results from human error.
7. Calls without termination: The CDA toll-free system was designed to ensure that every call originating within California will connect to the local HICAP provider serving the caller's community. To ensure this service, unrecognized area code/prefix combinations are directed to the California Health Advocates (CHA).

## **Responsibility for Reporting Misrouted Calls**

In order to maintain the integrity of the toll-free system, misrouted calls must be reported to the CDA. While a site may not be aware of the cause of a misrouted call, informing the CDA of the misdirected call provides the feedback mechanism the Department needs to identify and resolve problems with the toll-free line.

**How to Report Misrouted Calls and Operation Problems**

Changes in local I&A/R phone numbers or reports of misrouted calls to the HICAP toll-free system must be submitted to the CDA Office of Public Affairs. Please use the appropriate CDA Statewide Toll-Free Line Service Request Form and either fax or e-mail.

**Please fax requests to John Carr, Office of Public Affairs**

Fax number: (916) 324-4989 Telephone (916) 322-3887

E-mail: [jcarr@aging.ca.gov](mailto:jcarr@aging.ca.gov) and cc: [ccory@aging.ca.gov](mailto:ccory@aging.ca.gov)

Postal address: 1600 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Please ensure all necessary information specified in Attachment B2 or Attachment D2 is provided in order to properly make appropriate changes.

**Attachments to this Program Memo:**

1. **Attachment A2:** Listing of local HICAP telephone numbers throughout the State in relationship to the toll-free number 1-800-434-0222. (Terminating numbers)
2. **Attachment B2:** HICAP Toll-Free Line Service Request Form displays the format for reporting misrouted calls made to the HICAP sites.
3. **Attachment C2:** Listing of the local prefix-routing information for each HICAP site associated with the toll-free number 1-800-434-0222.
4. **Attachment D2:** Site Change Form submitted to CDA to report a site move or change in terminating number.

**Original Signed by Lynda Terry**

Lynda Terry  
Director

cc: California Commission on Aging  
  
Area Agencies on Aging Directors  
  
California Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
  
Department of General Services  
Telecommunications Division, Client Services  
  
HICAP sites  
  
CHA - California Health Advocates (HICAP)